

## FATHERS MANY BOYS

Prof. E. J. Houston, of Philadelphia, a Warm Friend.

## HIS NUMEROUS ACTIVITIES

A Scientist, Inventor, Teacher, Preacher, Patent Expert, Mining Engineer, and Author of Interesting Books for His Beloved Boys. Has Had Many Noted Pupils.

Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 21.—You will be surprised to learn that the most popular "boy" in Philadelphia is sixty-three years old.

He doesn't look it—his age, of course. Neither does he act it. If he did, he wouldn't be the "boy" that he is, nor would he be the personal friend of 50,000 boys who play marbles in the streets and baseball in the vacant lots.

Boys all over the country—all over the world, in fact—know him and love him. He is one of them. He has done more for boys than any other individual in Pennsylvania, and he is now engaged in a work which will make him an immortal in the juvenile hall of fame.

If you do not know him, you should make the acquaintance of Prof. Edwin J. Houston, scientist, inventor, teacher, preacher, author, patent expert, and "boy." He excels in every one of his attainments and in none more than in being a thorough boy.

Back of every organization in Philadelphia is Dr. Houston. They know him in every church, in every boys' club, in every school, at Girard College, the House of Refuge, and wherever else a group of boys is brought together. For twenty-five years he has been the main-spring of the Young Men's Christian Association in Philadelphia. He organized and is the dominating influence in the Boys' Brotherhood. He was a potent factor in the Boy Scouts of America, the Swimming Association, and the Philadelphia Association Workers with Boys.

## Writes Thrilling Stories.

He has given not only his time, which is worth many dollars a day to him, but he has gone down into his pocket and given liberally of the bountiful income which his brains and his effort have brought him to make life easier and pleasanter and more hopeful for the boys of Philadelphia.

Now he is throwing away opportunities for making money and is devoting a large portion of his time to writing books for boys. He knows that every boy likes a good story, a thriller, he is turning out thrillers at the rate of several each year, and every one of them carries a fund of useful information to the thousands of boys who read it.

"I believe in being respectfully yellow," is Prof. Houston's theory. "I do not mean by that books which contain unhealthy sensationalism, but things which might happen and probably will happen to the boy who reads them. I believe in letting him know what some other fellow did under certain circumstances, then he will know what to do when the same circumstances befall him."

"I can by this method make any class of boys become thoroughly in love with natural science. Make it like a detective story. That's what science is."

And Prof. Houston ought to know. His opinion on either is that of an expert. Of boys he says:

"If you get hold of a boy in the proper way you can do almost anything with him. I don't believe in looking upon a boy as a necessary evil, for he is as nice a little animal as you can find. A great deal of what passes for wickedness in boys is really the necessity which nature has implanted within them to 'blow off.' I call it a physiological explosion."

## Likes Lively Youngsters.

"This blowing off is nature's method of getting rid of surplus energy, and does not indicate that a boy is 'full of the devil,' as some persons say."

"Give me a boy who is full of life and energy," I would give that for a wishy-washy sugar-and-candy boy who sits in a corner and looks pretty. And the professor's fingers snapped like a firecracker.

"You must treat a boy as though he were somebody. Make him feel that he amounts to something. Don't bring him up on left-overs. I was one of the first to advocate this method to the Young Men's Christian Association houses throughout the country."

"It was the general custom a few years ago to let the boys into the gymnasium, for instance, when the men didn't want it; to permit them to enter the reading-room only at hours when their elders were certain not to be there. I preached against such treatment pretty much all over the country, and now the boys have a chance. Have things intended for the boys. They don't relish left-overs any more than their elders."

It was his pleading for the boy which made Prof. Houston well acquainted with the boys of other cities. Even abroad he runs into him. He is no more surprised at the "Hello, Professor," in Paris or Berlin than he is at Broad and Chestnut.

Prof. Houston was born July 3, 1844, at Alexandria, Va., his mother's home. His father was a bank teller in Philadelphia, coming from Lancaster to this city. When an infant Edwin was brought to the home in this city and has lived here ever since.

He first became interested in boys' work when he was a boy himself attending the Sunday school of the Church of the Nativity, Eleventh and Mount Vernon streets. He was then sixteen years old.

## Teaches Sunday School.

Later, when he was between seventeen and eighteen years old, he taught a Sunday school class at the Church of the Saviour, Thirty-ninth and Chestnut streets. While engaged in this work he did a great deal of work among the boys in the mill district, near what is now Angola.

In 1860 he was admitted as a student to the Central High School, from which he was graduated in 1864. For a time he taught in a private school in Chestnut street, and then he went to the Central High School as professor of civil engineering. He was almost immediately given the chair of natural philosophy, and physical geography, which he has held for twenty-eight years, being still the professor emeritus in that branch.

Occasionally Dr. Houston attends the chapel exercises at the Central High School. When he appears upon the platform the boys figuratively "raise the roof." Such cheering and applause are never heard except when Dr. Houston comes to chapel. He has fathered high school athletes and has been one of the prime movers in the effort to obtain an athletic field for the high school students.

Prof. Houston always regarded his work at school as play work. During his active labors at the Central High School he taught many boys who later became famous men. One of his students was Elihu Thomson, whom Prof. Houston declares to be the greatest living electrician. After young Thomson left school he and Prof. Houston, pupil and teacher, invented the Thomson-Houston electric system, upon which the sun never sets, for it is used in every country on the globe. It comprises electric traction, arc, light, and incandescent light systems.

Other pupils of Prof. Houston were Gov. Robert E. Pattison, Judge James

Gay Gordon, Dr. S. S. Cohen, Albert H. Smyth, late professor of literature at the Central High School; Judge Abraham M. Beiler, District Attorney Samuel P. Rotan, Dr. Judson Daland, John C. Bell, Ellis Ginnel, Joseph H. Bromley, Frank H. Spencer Edmonds, Edwin S. Cramp, Daniel Guggenheim, Judge Ferguson, Charles Hilde, William H. Greene, Frank P. Pritchard, Peter Well, William Clarg Mason, Frank R. Shattuck, Clinton Rogers Woodruff, and Albert B. Weimer.

In the field of electricity Prof. Houston has done his most conspicuous work. He was twice president of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, an honor accorded to no other man. He was chief electrician of the great World's Fair at Chicago, and also of the exhibition held in Philadelphia in 1888. He is a member of the most learned societies, and has written eighty books on scientific subjects.

Houston's New Physical Geography has had a sale of 20,000 copies a year for thirty-five years. His dictionary of electrical words, terms, and phrases has gone through many editions, and has been revised and brought up to date several times. His most recent dictionary on electrical words and terms two weeks old is a back number, so rapid has been the progress of this wonderful science and its applications.

In addition to his literary work Prof. Houston has had time to build up a profitable business as an expert in patent causes.

This is the man who is giving up his valuable time to the writing stories for boys simply because he believes that by presenting his subject in a manner which will attract a boy and hold his attention he can instill in that boy a thirst for knowledge which will lead him in search of truths which he might otherwise never find.

## First Book for Boys.

Prof. Houston's first book was "The Boy Prospector." In it he teaches his youthful readers mining engineering, mineralogy, and geology. The boy does not suspect it when he begins the story. He is told that he is to go to the mine. He is told that he is to go to the mine. He is told that he is to go to the mine.

"I am trying to write boys' books of such a nature that by reading them, instead of being uninterested by study, they will be filled with a desire to know more concerning the subjects which are treated in the book." This is Prof. Houston's own explanation of the work he has attempted.

## Friend of Thomas Edison.

The same may be said of "The Boy Electrician." Any boy who has a natural bent for electricity will develop this book. It will settle his business in life. Many of the incidents in the story are happenings in the life of Thomas A. Edison, who is a warm personal friend of Dr. Houston. "The Boy Geologist" is a thrilling story which will teach more geology in one reading than a boy could absorb in a term of school study.

More thrillers from the professor's pen are three books, forming the North Pole series and called "The Search for the North Pole," "The Discovery of the North Pole," and "Cast Away at the North Pole." They describe the successful trip of his young heroes to reach the north pole by means of an airship equipped with all the latest apparatus and tell how they overcame tremendous difficulties and recorded scientific facts.

Nine books for boys have thus far come from Dr. Houston's pen, all in a year. He is a rapid thinker and the ordinary method of writing or even writing with a typewriter is much too slow for him. He is an expert stenographer and writes all of his books by that method. Then a stenographer, whose time is not nearly so valuable as his own, transcribes what he writes and puts his manuscript in typewritten form.

Nor the writing of books the only effort Dr. Houston is making to reach the boys of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. Nearly every Sunday he gives a talk, or lay sermon, at some large institution. He is a great favorite at Girard College, where he talks once a month, and at the Boys' House of Refuge, Glenn Mills, where he talks at least one Sunday in each month.

During the summer Dr. Houston goes camping with boys from the Brotherhood House, generally at the seashore, and romps and frolics with them in the surf or on the beach, as much of a boy as any one there.

Dr. Houston has no boys of his own, being a bachelor. There is probably why he is able to feel a keen interest in every boy he sees. He lives with a sister at 4619 Chester avenue, where he entertains whole clubs of boys, throwing his large house wide open to his young visitors.

## Jack London Among the Lepers.

On his way around the world for the Woman's Home Companion Jack London visited the lepers of Molokai, on the island of Hawaii.

"Leprosy is not so contagious as is imagined," writes Mr. London in the January Woman's Home Companion. "I went for a week's visit to the Settlement, and I took my time along—all of which would have been wasted had we had any apprehension of contracting the disease. Nor did we wear long, gauntleted gloves and keep apart from the lepers. On the contrary, we mingled freely with them, and before we left knew scores of them by sight and name. The precautions of simple cleanliness seem to be all that is necessary. On returning to their own homes, after having been among and handling lepers, the lepers, such as the physicians and the superintendent, merely wash their faces and hands with mildly antiseptic soap and change their coats."

## A Prerogative of Wealth.

In a suburb less than twenty miles from New York lives a rich woman, who, although generous and charitable, has always been extremely dictatorial. All who have been employed by her, in whatever capacity, have felt the caprices of her temper, and while her patronage is valuable, it is nevertheless accepted with considerable dread. An elderly German landscape gardener, who has a gift for shrewd comment of an epigrammatic sort, has done a great deal of work for the lady in question, and the other day an acquaintance asked him how he managed to get along.

"What do you think of Mrs. — any way?" pursued the friend, anxious to get an expression of opinion.

"Well," replied the old gardener, in his customary slow and precise way, "Mrs. — is a very rich woman, so we will say she is eccentric; if she were poor, she would be the devil."

## SOCIAL AND PERSONAL.

Continued from Page Four.

Representative and Mrs. Barchfeld, of the Connecticut, and will return to Princeton the latter part of the week.

Mr. James E. Rosenthal went to Baltimore on Thursday to attend the concert and dance given by the Harmony Club.

Mr. and Mrs. Emanuel Stein, of 1109 P street, have as their guest Miss Irma Strauss, of Baltimore.

Miss Edna Ball, of Norfolk, Va., is the guest of Miss Juliette Meyer.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kann and their two sons, Donald and Manuel, of Baltimore, are the guests of Mrs. Sandheimer, of Fifth street.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Stern, of the Ashley, were the guests of relatives in Philadelphia for a few days.

Mr. Melville Mann, of Baltimore, is the guest of Mr. Herbert J. Rich, of Harvard street.

Miss Helen Goldsmith, of West Fayette street, Baltimore, is visiting Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Hecht at 619 K street northwest.

Miss B. London, of New York, is visiting her cousin, Mrs. M. A. Tanzer, of 196 Fifth street northwest.

## ALEXANDRIA.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Cochran have returned from a week's visit to Dr. Cochran's brother, Mr. Robert Cochran, of The Planes, Va.

Mr. Edward Stribling, of Norfolk, was in town for a short visit the past week.

Mr. and Mrs. William Alexander have returned to their home in Lancaster, Pa., after a short visit to Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Leadbeater.

Mr. William Bathurst Daingerfield is spending the holidays with his mother, Mrs. W. B. Daingerfield, in North Washington street.

Mr. and Mrs. John B. Dennis, of Washington, are spending the holidays with Mrs. Harrison B. Hudson.

Mr. Robley D. Broomback has returned from his former home in Luray, where he spent Christmas with his family.

Mr. and Mrs. George Garr Henry, of Morristown, N. J., are the guests of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Boothe, Jr., in North Washington street.

Miss Georgie French has returned from Fredericksburg, Va., where she was the guest of her sister, Mrs. Clarence R. Howard, at "Kenmore."

Mr. Boylan Green is the guest of his uncle, Rev. Berryman Green, on Seminary Hill.

Messrs. Montrose and Courtney Houck have returned to New York after spending Christmas in their old home in this city.

Mr. Lloyd Uhler, of Pittsburgh, Pa., is the guest of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Uhler, in Cameron street.

Miss Elizabeth Jones left Wednesday evening for Norfolk, where she will be the guest of Miss Huggins.

Miss Belle Minnigerode was the guest of Mrs. William Greene during the past week.

Mrs. Doyle Brockett and Miss Victoria Peck left here Friday to visit friends in Ohio.

Mr. and Mrs. William Wood, of Lynchburg, are spending the holidays with relatives in this city.

Mr. L. T. Downey is spending the holidays with his parents in this city.

Miss Rose McDonald has returned from Berryville, Va., where she spent Christmas as the guest of her aunt, Mrs. Thomas McCormick.

Miss Nannie Jones is spending the week with Miss Hilda Shriver at Union Mills, Md.

Mrs. Addie Lather has returned to her home in Philadelphia after a three weeks' visit to her mother in this city. Her brother, Mr. Joseph Woodfield, accompanied her.

Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Haggerty, of Philadelphia, are visiting Mr. and Mrs. John A. Marshall in Wolfe street.

Miss Ella Broadus is visiting her sister, Mrs. James Elliott, in Chicago.

Miss Annie T. Taylor, daughter of Hon. George W. Taylor, of Alabama, is the

## CARE FOR THE SHOES.

Lesson in Tidiness for Young Girls.

By her street shoes as much as any other thing is the well-dressed girl to be known, and, while the task of keeping footwear in order seems a disagreeable one to her who has not a maid, a little method will simplify it exceedingly.

For instance, calfskin boots that are so difficult to clean when thoroughly dirty may long be kept from that condition if they are given several coats of blacking as soon as they come from the shop.

In point of fact, this may be done before they are sent home. If after that they are put on trees as soon as being taken from the feet and wiped with a piece of unbleached cotton cloth to be reserved for the purpose, they will keep in fine condition for weeks. Even mud, if allowed to remain on to dry before removing with a stiff clothes brush, will do little harm. A good wiping with the cloth will bring up the perfect shine again. The secret of this lies in having a thick coating of blacking put on them before the boots are first worn.

In caring for any kind of street shoes big gloves should always be pulled on to protect the hands.

Russet leather should have precisely the same treatment that is given to calfskin. Incidentally brushing the laces or button-holes and edges of the soles with a stiff white broom before rubbing with the cloth should be done to all boots.

If by any possibility calfskin boots become thoroughly wet they should be well covered with kerosene oil before being put away on trees to dry. The oil will prevent their hardening. It should be wiped off the next day with a soft cloth and the boots be given a new coat of blacking. Only instead of one coat at a time they should always have three.

There is nothing to do to russet leather when it is wet but to put the boots on and let them dry, oiling with the kind prepared for them when dry.

Buckskin shoes when wet in the least

hardened, losing all their velvety look. Gentle rubbing with a bit of fine sandpaper when the leather is dry will restore the buckskin perfectly. Care should be taken not to do this so hard as to wear a hole.

There is nothing as dainty or as pretty as satin slippers to match eye-gown, and yet many girls feel the cost is too great, as these slippers are frail and so easily that twice or three times are all that they can be worn. One clever girl went through last winter, and a very gay one at that, with three pairs—one pink, another white, and a third blue—and at the end of the winter they were still quite fresh.

She had a row of cardboard boxes on the shelf in her closet and the morning after she had worn the slippers her first thought was to clean them and put them away until the next time she wore them. It is most essential to have trees for each pair, and they should be put on as easily as the slippers are taken off, as the satin is apt to be moist from perspiration, and if the shoes are not put on trees immediately they will shrink and the next time they will be too tight.

If after rubbing them off carefully with gasoline two or three spots remain there is nothing easier than to take a little paint and color them over. After this is done wrap the slippers very carefully in tissue paper and put them away in the box well covered so that the dust will not get at them.

A good idea is to keep the stockings in the box with the slippers, then at the last moment there will not be any rushing around trying to find them. White gloves are another problem, as they are so expensive. Long ones are the hardest to replenish, but as the tops don't wear out cut them off at the wrist and buy some short ones, which can be easily added to the old tops. When the wrists are wrinkled the seam will never show and you have a perfectly good pair of long white gloves.

Another saving idea is to have a large box devoted exclusively to hair ornaments, and in this way they will last much better, and you will always know where to lay your hands on them when they are needed.

## HERE AND THERE.

There have been over 50,000 church bells cast in Troy, N. Y., since the first foundry was built there in 1825.

Near Wolcott, N. Y., lightning struck a house and killed a cat. A child playing with the cat was not injured.

Arrangements have been made in sunny Arizona for baseball straight through the winter—six games a week.

The colonies of Great Britain have nearly 100 times more area than the mother country, of France eighteen times, and of Germany five times.

Ex-Congressman "Private" John Allen is living on a farm near Tupelo, Miss., and is so well fixed that he will not touch a law case for less than \$2,000.

H. G. Wells, the English literature, in his youth often wrote 8,000 words a day, while Conan Doyle, it is said, once wrote a story of 2,000 words at a sitting.

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Pony Coats.....	\$120.00	\$50.00
Pony Coats.....	\$200.00	\$90.00 and \$100.00
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